



General Assembly

February Session, 2020

**Raised Bill No. 5242**

LCO No. 1481



Referred to Committee on HOUSING

Introduced by:  
(HSG)

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE RISK OF HOMELESSNESS FOR THOSE  
RELEASED FROM THE CUSTODY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
CORRECTION.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 18-81z of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2020*):

3 (a) The Department of Correction, the Board of Pardons and Paroles  
4 and the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch shall  
5 develop a risk assessment strategy for offenders committed to the  
6 custody of the Commissioner of Correction that will (1) utilize a risk  
7 assessment tool that accurately rates an offender's likelihood to (A)  
8 recidivate upon release from custody, and (B) become homeless upon  
9 release from custody, in accordance with subsection (b) of this section,  
10 and (2) identify the support programs that will best position the  
11 offender for successful reentry into the community. Such strategy shall  
12 incorporate use of both static and dynamic factors and utilize a gender-  
13 responsive approach that recognizes the unique risks and needs of  
14 female offenders. In the development of such risk assessment strategy,

15 the department, board and division may partner with an educational  
16 institution that has expertise in criminal justice and psychiatry to  
17 evaluate risk assessment tools and customize a risk assessment tool to  
18 best meet the state's needs.

19 (b) As part of such strategy, the Commissioner of Correction shall  
20 screen all offenders committed to the custody of the commissioner to  
21 assess their housing needs and homelessness risk. Such assessment shall  
22 include the offender's homelessness history, family and other supports,  
23 prior tenancy and rental history, income and employment and  
24 experience with conducting housing searches and maintaining a  
25 household. Such assessment shall be used to inform the offender's  
26 reentry plan under section 2 of this act.

27 (c) On or before January 1, 2009, and annually thereafter, the  
28 department, board and division shall report to the Governor and the  
29 joint standing committee of the General Assembly on judiciary, in  
30 accordance with section 11-4a, on the development, implementation  
31 and effectiveness of such strategy.

32 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2020*) (a) The Department of  
33 Correction, in consultation with the Department of Housing, shall  
34 establish the returning home program to provide housing assistance for  
35 persons released to parole or a supervised community setting. Such  
36 program shall use evidence-based practices to prevent and reduce  
37 homelessness. The Department of Correction shall determine a person's  
38 eligibility for the program using the risk assessment tool for  
39 homelessness conducted under section 18-81z of the general statutes, as  
40 amended by this act. The Department of Correction shall be given access  
41 to the state's homeless management information system, as defined in  
42 24 CFR 578.3.

43 (b) The Department of Correction shall contract with nonprofit  
44 community or locally based organizations that are qualified to provide  
45 housing search and navigation services, housing-related case  
46 management, rapid rehousing and related services, provided such

47 program shall not be used to fund halfway houses. Such program shall  
48 provide housing assistance to persons who lack a plan for housing after  
49 release. Any housing provided under this section shall confer rights and  
50 responsibilities of tenancy pursuant to a rental agreement and shall  
51 meet any applicable federal housing quality standards.

52 (c) Not later than January 2, 2021, and annually thereafter, the  
53 Department of Correction shall submit a report concerning the housing  
54 needs and homelessness of incarcerated persons, the impact of housing  
55 instability on incarceration length and the results of the program  
56 established under this section, in accordance with the provisions of  
57 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of  
58 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to housing  
59 and the judiciary. Such report shall include (1) the number of  
60 incarcerated persons screened for housing status and risk of  
61 homelessness relative to the total number of persons eligible for such  
62 screening, (2) the number of incarcerated persons reporting a lack of  
63 stable housing or a high risk of homelessness, (3) the number of persons  
64 receiving housing assistance under the program established under this  
65 section and the cost of service and duration per capita, (4) the number  
66 of incarcerated persons identified as having housing needs, but who did  
67 not receive any housing assistance, (5) the number of persons staying  
68 beyond their discharge date pursuant to section 18-101b of the general  
69 statutes and the length of such additional stay, (6) the rate of housing  
70 placement and retention for the total population served, (7) the types of  
71 housing assistance services delivered and the basis in evidence-based  
72 practices, and (8) the impact of the housing assistance services provided  
73 under this section on incarcerated persons' use of a correctional facility  
74 or halfway house beds and incarcerated persons' release to the  
75 community without parole or a supervised community setting and  
76 diversion from emergency shelter programs. The department shall also  
77 submit a copy of such report to the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning  
78 Division within the Office of Policy and Management.

79 Sec. 3. Section 18-81w of the general statutes is repealed and the  
80 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2020*):

81 (a) The Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division within the  
82 Office of Policy and Management shall develop and implement a  
83 comprehensive reentry strategy that provides a continuum of custody,  
84 care and control for offenders who are being supervised in the  
85 community, especially those offenders who have been discharged from  
86 the custody of the Department of Correction, and assists in maintaining  
87 the prison population at or under the authorized bed capacity. The  
88 reentry strategy shall support the rights of victims, protect the public  
89 and promote the successful transition of offenders from incarceration to  
90 the community by (1) maximizing any available period of community  
91 supervision for eligible and suitable offenders, (2) identifying and  
92 addressing barriers to the successful transition of offenders from  
93 incarceration to the community, including, but not limited to, lack of  
94 housing, (3) ensuring sufficient criminal justice resources to manage  
95 offender caseloads, (4) identifying community-based supervision,  
96 treatment, educational, housing and other services and programs that  
97 are proven to be effective in reducing recidivism among the population  
98 served by such services and programs, and (5) establishing employment  
99 initiatives for offenders through public and private services and  
100 partnerships by reinvesting any savings achieved through a reduction  
101 in prison population.

102 (b) The success of the reentry strategy shall be measured by: (1) The  
103 rates of recidivism and community revictimization, (2) the number of  
104 inmates eligible for release on parole, transitional supervision,  
105 probation or any other release program, (3) the number of inmates who  
106 make the transition from incarceration to the community in compliance  
107 with a discharge plan, (4) prison bed capacity ratios, (5) the adequacy of  
108 the network of community-based treatment, vocational, educational,  
109 housing, supervision and other services and programs, and (6) the  
110 reinvestment of any savings achieved through a reduction in prison  
111 population into reentry and community-based services and programs.

112 (c) Not later than February 15, 2008, and annually thereafter, the  
113 Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division within the Office of Policy  
114 and Management shall submit a report, in accordance with the

115 provisions of section 11-4a, on the success of the reentry strategy based  
116 on the measures set forth in subsection (b) of this section to the joint  
117 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
118 matters relating to corrections, public safety, housing and  
119 appropriations and the budgets of state agencies. Any such report  
120 submitted on or after February 15, 2021, shall (1) also address the rate of  
121 inmates released from incarceration who experience homelessness, and  
122 (2) be posted on the Internet web site of the Office of Policy and  
123 Management and presented to the Criminal Justice Policy Advisory  
124 Commission, including any information obtained from the report of the  
125 Department of Correction pursuant to section 2 of this act.

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|---|------------------------|-------------|
| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: |                        |             |
| Section 1   | <i>October 1, 2020</i> | 18-81z      |
| Sec. 2  | <i>October 1, 2020</i> | New section |
| Sec. 3  | <i>October 1, 2020</i> | 18-81w      |

**Statement of Purpose:**

To require the Department of Correction to assess the risk of homelessness for incarcerated persons released from its custody and to create a program to address such homelessness and to require additional reports to measure the extent of such homelessness.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*